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Navy Seabee Veterans of
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Vietnam Veterans of
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Virginia National Guard
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July 11, 2012

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL OF VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

2013 Position Paper

Clarify Code Language regarding In-State Tuition Eligibility

1. **Objective:** To ensure that, for veterans, the intent to attend a public institution of higher education in the Commonwealth is sufficient for the purpose of establishing domiciliary intent and determining eligibility for in-state tuition rates.
2. **Background:**
 - A top priority of the JLC in 2010-2011 was waiving of the one-year residency requirement for veterans to qualify in-state tuition rates, provided other steps were taken to establish residency.
 - The initiative had the support of Governor McDonnell and two bills – HB1861 (Anderson/Stolle) and SB824 (Edwards/Barker/McWaters) – passed the 2011 General Assembly unanimously.
 - Senator McWaters submitted a bill, SB605, in the 2012 General Assembly session. This bill clarifies the legislation adopted in 2011 and more fully reflects the intent of the original JLC proposal.
3. **Discussion:**
 - In making its proposal to the Governor and General Assembly, it was the intent of the JLC that veterans would be granted in-state tuition eligibility regardless of any other intent on the part of the veterans, such as to remain in the Commonwealth after completing his/her degree.
 - In making its recommendation, the JLC realized that some veterans will find work outside the Commonwealth after graduation from a Virginia college or university, just as do many non-veteran graduates. But the JLC believes that many veterans, if welcomed to the Commonwealth, will choose to stay in Virginia and seek employment here after graduation.
 - The JLC believes that most veterans attend college as “independent students.” Even if they are pursuing an undergraduate degree, they are more closely aligned with graduate students in age and financial situation. Unlike a typical undergraduate student, veteran students do not rely on their parents for financial support. As such, they do not come to Virginia just to attend college. They come to Virginia to get an education. And for the entire time they are in school in Virginia, the Commonwealth is their home.
 - With the advent of Iraq/Afghanistan student veteran organizations on Virginia campuses, the bonds created among student veterans will encourage them to remain in the Commonwealth after graduation, enhancing the Virginia workforce and Virginia communities.
4. **Recommendation:** That the Governor and General Assembly enact measures to clarify eligibility for in-state tuition for veterans.